1: Jenness--97-98 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 262

"Fishing and hunting are the Eskimo's sole means of subsistence, and meat and fish are his staple diet. Neither the mainland in Coronation gulf nor the islands north of it furnish edible fruits or roots in any abundance. The only vegetable foods obtainable around Dolphin and Union strait are the sorrel, kongulik, (Oxyria digyna) and the watery alpine bearberry, kovlut (Arctostaphylos alpina); and even these are so rare and scattered that the wandering native rarely troubles to stoop down and pluck them. During the six months from May to October that I wandered with the Eskimos over southwest Victoria island, only once did I see a blade of sorrel eaten, and twice a few stray bearberries. The latter indeed often fail to reach maturity before they are overtaken by winter and covered with the falling snow, while most of those that do mature are eaten by the longspurs and the ptarmigan. Crowberries, paunrat (Empetrum nigrum) are sometimes eaten by the natives, but not cloudberries, akpit (Rubus chamaemorus), although they grow plentifully around Great Bear lake and perhaps in other places as well. Mr. Stefansson, in a letter commenting on this strange neglect of the cloudberries, says, 'My western natives attempted to teach the local people the use of these berries. We found that some of the children picked it up rather readily, but some mothers were displeased at the idea of the children trying them and few of the women tasted them, though a good many of the men did.'

The roots of Polygonum species -- the masu that the Alaskan and Mackenzie river

natives esteem so highly -- are eaten only sparingly by the Copper Eskimos. The same letter of Mr. Stefansson that was quoted above contains a valuable note about this root. He states that it 'is used to a slight extent for food in Bank's island by the Victoria island Eskimos when they are over there, and according to them it is used more extensively in the center of Victoria island, where the Prince Albert and Albert Edward Bay people used to meet. The first day we were at Rae River we joined the natives in a meal of masu roots and were told that they had been eating a good many for the preceding several days, for food had been scarce. We continued to eat masu during the summer, but we probably ate it oftener than would have been the case had I not had with me Alaska Eskimos who, I believe, commonly suggested it.'

In seasons of scarcity, of course, the Copper Eskimos will resort to any kind of food. Thus several Kanghiryuak natives are said to have died through eating 'tea' (niokak) during a famine. (2) But the only vegetable food that enters their regular diet is the

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"2. [AW: this footnote misnumbered in original text] This 'tea' was probably a toadstool, called 'tea' from a remote resemblance to the 'tabloid tea' that was used by the expedition."

semidigested reindeer moss taken directly from the first stomach or rumen of the caribou. In summer when cutting up his deer the hunter usually eats as he wants of this and throws the rest away. Only occasionally is it taken to camp, where it is mixed with water till it has the appearance of spinach set out to soak. It is then left to stand for a few hours, and eaten cold. In the autumn, however, the stomach is allowed to freeze intact with the herbs inside and kept for the early winter, when it is cut into slices, distributed with the ordinary meat among the different families in [98] the settlement and eaten frozen. (1) Mr. Stefansson thought that the natives never pour seal-oil on it because all their oil is cached on the coast in summer, and they have no opportunity of eating the two together; but this is not quite true, for the natives often take a small quantity of seal-oil inland with them in the spring, and in any case more reindeer-moss is consumed in the early winter, when the natives are living largely on seal-meat, than in summer. The real reason why the two are not eaten together is because there is a taboo against it.

"1. Dr. Anderson says that when the stomach contains woody grass fibre instead of the succulent reindeer moss it is usually discarded by the western Eskimos; whether this is true of the Copper Eskimos also is uncertain.""

The Copper Eskimos are predominantly eaters of fish and meat. Collinson, who calls them a carnivorous race, says that for the most part they consume their food raw. (2) This is not quite correct. What Parry observes of the Eskimos of Igloolik is equally true of the Copper Eskimos, 'they prefer to boil their food when they can obtain fuel.' (3) In winter, unless blubber for the lamps is unusually scarce, the principal meal of the day is always boiled seal-meat, but in summer the Eskimo often suffers from a scarcity of fuel and has to eat his food raw and unfrozen or merely sun dried. Cooking under any circumstances is a slow and tedious process; using a lamp and blubber, it takes about an hour to boil the meat even after the snow has been melted. In summer, using dry willow twigs for fuel, with the pot set on a small hearth of three stones (one on each side on which it rests and a third at the back to keep in the heat), the operation takes a little less time. But willow is not always procurable; for example the Colville hills in many places contain neither willow nor its best substitute, heather, and the same is true of many places on the mainland."

"2. Collinson, p. 285."

"3. Parry, Vol. III, p. 285. Cf. Murdoch, Am. Naturalist, Jan. 1887, p. 15."

1; Jenness--100 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 262, 264

"The fish and deer-meat dried in the summer, and the meat kept frozen from the autumn, are generally all consumed by the beginning of the new year. In these latitudes the sun disappears for the winter night about the beginning of December, and few seals are caught before the middle of that month. On December 6, 1914, 'dinner' in an Eskimo's hut consisted of four courses, caribou-fat, frozen caribou-meat, a dried and very mouldy fish, and, last of all, a portion of boiled caribou-leg. The Eskimos were camped on the coast at the time, so the boiling of caribou-meat was not prohibited. They like to have a stock of caribou back-fat to eat with the frozen meat and to nibble at whenever they feel inclined. During the winter, however, seal-meat constitutes their principal, and for several months their only food. Small pieces of skin and blubber are frequently eaten both when cutting up the seal and later; especially is this the case with the bearded seal. A strip of blubber is usually left on the table inside the hut, and the visitor helps himself to a small cube of it about the size of a sugar lump. The liver and kidneys are always eaten raw, generally unfrozen, while the intestines of the bearded seal are considered a delicacy. So, too, are the flippers, both of the bearded seal (Erignathus barbatus) and of the rough seal (Phoca hispida). The blood is poured into a sealskin bucket, and kept for thickening the soup; generally it freezes into a solid lump."

1: Jenness--101 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
262.

"Around Prince Albert sound and Minto inlet polar bears are almost as important an item of diet in winter as seals. The liver is said to produce sickness and is therefore never eaten. According to McClintock, the same thing is said in Greenland about the heart, (1) but whether this is so among the Copper Eskimos I do not know."

"1. McClintock, p.100."

1: Jenness--101-102 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 262, 221

"Whether fish or caribou predominate in their summer diet depends entirely on the resources of the particular region in which they live. (2) Thus in 1915, in southwest Victoria island, sealing was definitely abandoned at the end of April. In May, when the main body of the caribou was migrating north across Dolphin and Union strait, the Eskimos ate more caribou-meat than fish, especially those parts of the animal that are less suitable for drying, such as the head, the chine, the shoulders and the thighs. In June caribou were less plentiful, so during that and the following month the people lived mainly on fish, moving about [102] from one group of lakes to another and incidentally hunting any caribou that they might happen to encounter. By the end of July even the

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"2. The introduction of rifles has naturally increased the possibilities of hunting and made caribou correspondingly more important. Fish-nets are slowing[sic] coming into vogue, but as long as the caribou remain numerous the Eskimos will always spend more time in hunting than in fishing, because the caribou furnish not only food, but skins for clothing and for tents, sinew for sewing and for small lashings, and bone and horn that can be worked up into implements of various kinds."

larger lakes were becoming free of ice, and jigging with hook and line or spearing with the long trident was no longer possible; besides it was necessary to obtain a supply of short-haired summer skins for clothing. So the Eskimos began their summer packing, scouring the land day after day, securing a caribou here one day, two or three there the next, then no more perhaps for several days. When their supplies ran low they would sometimes rock the stones on the edges of the lakes and spear the small fish that darted out, eating them raw; or they would draw on the little stock of dried meat or back-fat that they carried for just such an emergency. In the latter half of September the caribou began to straggle back to the coast, and wait for the sea to freeze over so that they could migrate south again. Those Eskimos who had rifles remained near the coast to intercept them, the others, after a few days, went inland again to the lakes to fish, trusting to buy later, from their more fortunate countrymen, the autumn skins that they required for clothing, paying for them with fish. The main body of the caribou had passed by the middle of October, although for several weeks after an occasional herd of stragglers still drifted by. Satisfied with the game they had already killed, three families now decided to return to the hills and obtain a few fish which they could keep frozen for consumption during the winter; but a fourth family, indifferent to the attractions of fish, remained on the coast. Throughout November all these natives were living on the stores that they had laid by during the preceding months; indeed it was not until well on

in December that sufficient seals were caught to produce any noticeable change in their diet.

In the valley of the Coppermine river and behind Bathurst inlet caribou are even more numerous than in Victoria island. In other districts, again, they are comparatively scarce, and the Eskimos depend far more on fish. Thus very few caribou remain in Noahognik, on the south side of Dolphin and Union strait, during the summer months, after the spring migration is over. Natives who were spearing salmon here in June, 1916, went down to the Rae river in July for their hunting. For some distance east of the Coppermine river, too, most of the caribou disappear in the height of summer; it is only in the migrating seasons, in early spring and in autumn, that they are plentiful. Fish, on the other hand, are very abundant, and in certain areas squirrels; the fur of the latter is almost as valuable to the Eskimos as its meat."

I: Jenness--102-103 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 262, 252

"In cutting up a caribou the Eskimo is careful to preserve every particle of fat, even that around the intestines. In summer and autumn indeed, when the intestines are coated with a thick lining of fat, they are eaten raw and intact, the black pellets of excrement being usually, but not always, squeezed out between thumb and finger. (1) The liver also, like seal liver, is eaten raw, while the kidneys are thrown away or fed to the dogs. The lungs are sometimes cooked and eaten, but they are little esteemed; the heart, however, is carefully preserved to be split later into two halves, and either boiled at once or laid out on a stone to dry. The wall of the stomach, when emptied of its vegetable contents, is sometimes retained for dog-food, while the reticulum, which is shaped like a pouch, is cut off, filled with blood, and closed with one of the

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"1. Mr. Stefansson is mistaken, I think, when he says (Anthrop. Papers, A. M. N. H., Vol. XVI, pt. I, p. 61) that the intestinal and kidney fat are usually boiled by the Copper Eskimos. To my knowledge they were always eaten raw, though the back fat was often boiled. Alaskan and Mackenzie river Eskimos, however, frequently boil the intestinal fat as well."

bone pins that a hunter always carries on his bow-case; the blood is used, like seal-blood, to thicken the bouillon after the meat has been boiled. Unborn fawns are skinned, and either dried, or cooked at once, generally for the children to eat; sometimes, however, they are thrown directly to the dogs. As a rule the first parts of a caribou that are cooked, besides the tongue and the heart, are the fore-and hind-quarters, the bones of which contain the much prized marrow; the tongue, according to Eskimo rules of cookery, should be boiled with the tip uppermost. [103] After these parts come the ribs and the sternum, which are often coated with a layer of fat; the ribs are sometimes cracked between the teeth in order to extract the tiny quantity of marrow they contain. Last of all come the chine, the neck and the head; the last is split into four pieces, first down and then across, before being put into the pot, and the brains, as well as the marrow of the jaw-bones, are carefully picked out and eaten.

The marrow of the caribou, especially that of the leg-bones, is a great delicacy. The Copper Eskimo first scrapes all the meat and sinew from the bone with his knife; in autumn this is allowed to freeze and is eaten, sinew and all, in that condition; but in spring and summer the sinew is separated for making seal and fish lines. When the bone is clean the native takes two stones, one of which, the hammer stone, should have a rather sharp edge. With these he cracks off the knuckle at one end, then with the sharp edge of his hammer splits the bone down its shank, and picks out the marrow with

a bone spatula, saudlun. On rare occasions, to vary the monotony a little, the bone is roasted in the fire before the end is cracked off, when the marrow will flow out like very soft butter."

1: Jenness--104 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 262, 252

"The Copper Eskimos seldom take the trouble to clean their fish before boiling them. The intestines are drawn out and eaten raw, the remainder divided into large cross-sections and inserted into the pot. Many of the fish are very fat, and the top of the water becomes coated with oil, which the natives remove with the bottom of their horn ladles, and lick up with great gusto. The head, too, is rather a dainty, especially the eyes, because of the fat that surrounds them. Nothing is ever wasted; the Eskimos even suck the roots of the fins in order to extract the last remnants of meat and fat. In the harvest season of late spring, when as many fish as possible are dried and stored away, the heads are often the only parts that are cooked. Every bone in them is taken apart and sucked separately. The natives give them special names from fancied resemblances to natural objects; there is the ptarmigan, for example, the hare and the raven, while the five teeth in the front of the upper jaw are 'polar bear's claws.'"

1: Jenness--105 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 262

"The Eskimos are as fond of the fat that is found in geese, loons and eider ducks as they are of caribou fat. They pluck the feathers from the body of the bird, but leave them on the wings and legs. The body is then skinned and the meat cooked in the usual manner. Later the skin is boiled, and the layer of fat that forms on the surface of the water is either drunk immediately or skimmed off into another vessel, when it congeals like lard. The eggs of these birds are sometimes boiled, but most of the Eskimos seem to find them distasteful. Near Bernard harbour there was a rocky islet where the eider ducks had made their nesting ground. Hundreds of eggs could be obtained there each spring, but the local natives never troubled to collect them. I have seen an Eskimo girl take an immature egg from the body of a freshly-killed ptarmigan and eat it raw, but the same girl was horrified when a western native ate some boiled duck's eggs which turned out, when opened, to have immature chicks inside them."

1: Jenness--105 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 262

"The diet of the natives, then, is normally restricted to caribou, seal and fish. These are supplemented in a few local areas by one or two other animals, by polar bears in western Victoria island, squirrels in the valleys of the Rae and Coppermine rivers, and musk-oxen in both north-west Victoria island and in the country round Bathurst inlet. The skin of the musk-ox is prized for bedding only, being too coarse and heavy for ordinary clothing when deer-skin is available; but for this fact the animal would probably have long since been exterminated in this region. Ducks are numerous in the spring and fall, (1) geese and loons are met with occasionally, while ptarmigan, though rare in winter, may yet be found in most places at all seasons of the year. The natives shoot a few from time to time, but the supply is too uncertain for them to go out of their way to look for them. Sea-gulls and hawks are sometimes eaten, though Europeans find them distasteful. The children often shoot small birds, such as plovers and longspurs. Their skins serve for hand towels, while their bodies, if the birds are of medium size, are cooked with other meat; but small birds like longspurs and snow

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"1. Collinson, p. 285, says that the yellow top-knot of the male king eider was a favourite tit-bit with the Eskimos of Cambridge bay."

buntings are either eaten raw, head, feet and all, or thrown away. Occasionally a rabbit, a wolverine, or a wolf is shot, and hardly a summer passes that the Eskimos on the mainland do not secure two or three brown bears. Now that traps are becoming numerous more foxes are caught then [sic] before; the meat of a lean fox is very rank, but one that is rich in fat is palatable enough. Generally speaking, however, it is in the nature of a luxury for an Eskimo to dine off anything but caribou, fish or seal. (2)"

"2. Dr. Anderson (op. cit., p. 63) explains how the Eskimos procure the salt that is said to be so necessary for the maintenance of health in men and animals. He points out that the melted snow used for drinking water is frequently very saline, and that caribou meat, especially in the fall, contains a considerable amount of salt."

1: Jenness--106 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 262

"Cleanliness or daintiness is not a characteristic of the Eskimos. In the fall of the year they casually cache their caribou without removing the stomach. The semi-digested vegetable contents ferment and taint all the flesh, but the Copper Eskimo relishes both the smell and the flavour, though his more sophisticated brother in the west pronounces them disgusting. I have seen a man take a bone from rotten caribou-meat cached more than a year before, crack it and eat the marrow with evident relish, although it swarmed with maggots. As a rule such meat is fed to the dogs, but not infrequently the natives cook it for themselves, especially when fresh meat is not available. Dried fish that have become covered with mould are considered hardly inferior to freshly-dried. The grubs of the warble fly, which bore through the skins of the caribou in the spring, are picked out and eaten, either raw or boiled. Small birds, like longspurs, are skinned and swallowed whole without being cooked at all, and it was not uncommon to see a woman transfer the entrails of a freshly killed ptarmigan to her mouth. Caribou droppings are eaten occasionally in the hunting field, but I never saw them collected, as Mr. Stefansson relates, probably because the natives were seldom short of food during the summer that I lived amongst them."

1: Jenness--168 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 784, 262

"Not only are there no taboos on the names of the dead, but, under ordinary circumstances, no taboos in respect to the killing or eating of any animal, bird or fish whenever a person happens to have the same name. Thus Taktu, 'Kidney,' would eat the kidney of either the seal or the caribou, and Tutsik had no scruples about eating the old-squaw duck, ahangik, though his own second name was Ahangik.(3)"

"3. Exceptions to this rule are given in the next chapter."

2: Stefansson--29 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
262

"...the Kanhiryuarmiut...live in winter, most of them, on the southeast coast of Banks Island between Nelson Head and De Salis Bay, where in contradistinction to most other Eskimo tribes they depend for food chiefly on polar bears."

2; Stefansson--47 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 262, 174

"The Eskimo of Alaska from Kotzebue Sound along the coast depend to some extent on vegetable foods, not only in summer while these are growing and can be gathered for immediate use, but also in winter when the people draw on stores gathered in summer. The Mackenzie district is as well supplied as some Alaskan localities with edible vegetables, but very little attention is paid, or was, until a few years ago when Alaskan immigrants began to teach them the use of berries, leaves, and roots. The summer hunting districts of the Coronation Gulf Eskimo, too, are rich in vegetable foods, but the knowledge of their use is on an even lower level than in the Mackenzie Delta. That proximity to the vegetable-eating Indians of Alaska and not the richness of any given district determines the amount and variety of vegetables used, is one of the many reasons for thinking that the Arctic coast population did not come to their present home down the Mackenzie or from the Yukon. Had they come from a district rich in vegetables to a district rich in the same vegetables they would not have forgotten their use."

2: Stefansson--47-48 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 262

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Berries known as paunrat are eaten by all the Copper Eskimo, and a few other sorts are occasionally tasted. The most substantial and palatable fruit found on the Arctic coast is the akpek (salmon berry). This grows abundantly on the summer hunting grounds of the Coronation Gulf tribes and is sure to be found also on Bathurst Inlet. Its use, however, was never discovered in this locality, though the name seemed to be

known. It was the natives of our own party who first induced trial of these berries, and only a few of even those who spent most of the summer of 1910 near us acquired a taste for them. So far as we could learn the akpek was under no taboo, it simply had never occurred to anyone that they were food.

The one vegetable of some importance among the Copper Eskimo is the root known to them as mahu (Alaskan, masu). These can be dug for food at any season, though it is difficult to find them in winter under the snow. In summer they are eaten chiefly in times of scarcity, but occasionally from choice.

The mahu (Polygonum bistortum) is a parsnip-like root. Large specimens may be half an inch in diameter and ten or more inches long. They sometimes fork into two or more branches. They seem of better flavor and less 'woody' if gathered from sandy soil. If boiled and then kept in bags, as is the custom in Alaska, there develops an agreeable mild acid flavor and the roots become excellent eating to the taste of most white men. The Copper Eskimo never keep the roots to sour, but eat them from hand to mouth, either raw or boiled. [48]

Probably because of greater abundance of other foods, these roots are less used in the Mackenzie Delta than even in Victoria Island. They are abundant on the rivers flowing into the foot of Prince Albert Sound, and are said to be fairly common, too, in certain parts of Banks Island.

Reindeer moss is never gathered for food directly from the ground but is a highly relished dish when found in the paunch of a caribou. It is eaten warm with the warmth of the animal, or cold; preferably, however, the paunch is let lie in the sun several days till the contents begin to ferment. West of Cape Parry seal oil is poured over the soured mass, making a kind of salad; the Copper Eskimo, however, never take oil with them inland, and so far as we know do not have the opportunity of eating moss and oil together. No taboo would prevent their doing so, however, as land and sea foods are everywhere freely brought in contact as well as meat, vegetables (mahu), and oil.

Besides the undigested moss from the stomach, partly digested food from other portions of the alimentary canal is eaten. Among the Puiplirmiut especially, we saw deer droppings picked up from the snow and eaten directly; here they are also gathered in pails and kept in the house to be eaten as wanted. In Alaska caribou droppings are commonly used to thicken blood soup, or were, until white men's taboos began to restrain the practice. Some quantity of vegetables is also consumed through the eating of the stomachs and intestines of hares, marmots, and ptarmigan."

2: Stefansson--48 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 224, 262

"Most of the Copper Eskimo depend chiefly on seals for food in winter. Fish are said to be caught at all seasons by the Ekalluktogmiut; the Kanhiryuarmiut secure a large number of bears in midwinter in southern Banks Island and all tribes secure stray foxes and wolves now and then. Musk-oxen are never hunted by the Kanhiryuarmiut in winter, but if a band wanders down to the coast between Nelson Head and De Salis Bay the opportunity is taken advantage of. We never heard of caribou being killed in winter either on the mainland or on the islands west of Bathurst Inlet. Among most of the tribes in question no taboo prevents caribou hunting at any season, so far as our questions could bring out; it simply has never been tried. Among half a dozen tribes I have myself been assisted by natives in caribou hunting on the sea ice, and I have seen caribou meat and seal meat eaten at the same meal by members of the following tribes: Nagyuktogmiut, Kohluktogmiut, Pallirmiut, Puiplirmiut, Noahonirmiut, Akuliakattagmiut, and Kanhiryuarmiut. Some families said, however, that caribou and seal meat should not be cooked in the same pot unless the pot were suspended over the lamp by a fresh cord when the caribou meat was to be cooked; but most people paid no attention to even this prohibition."

2: Stefansson--58 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 262

"When deer have been killed in some number, most of the meat is cut up and half-dried, spread out on stones. The blood is always taken and used for soups, and the moss contents of the stomachs are allowed to ferment a few days in the sun and then eaten. This last dish, fresh or fermented, is about the only article of vegetable diet used by these Eskimo."

2: Stefansson--59
116, 224, 262

(1908-1912) 1914

Copper Eskimo

"A few wolves and foxes are killed every year, with the bow, for there is little trapping, and a good many spermophiles (marmots) are taken. The skins of all of these are valued for clothing, though deerskin is preferred, and the meat of all is eaten, though only the marmots are secured in numbers to make them of significance as sources of food. The Akuliakattagmiut and others kill a few muskrats, but they use neither skins nor meat but only use the tails for charms."

2: Stefansson--59 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 252, 262

"Caribou meat is more often eaten raw than cooked, whether fresh or half-dry, thawed, or frozen. Fish are also often eaten raw, whether frozen or not. This eating of raw meat and fish conforms to the Eskimo custom farther west, except that the western people show greater preference for the frozen state as opposed to the thawed. A raw dish peculiar to the Straits and Gulf Eskimo (at least, the Eskimo of my party knew nothing of such a practice) is fresh sealskin cut in small pieces with about a quarter inch of blubber left on it. The hair is not removed."

2: Stefansson--60 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 262

"In general, these Eskimo are not so fond of 'high' or partly decomposed fish as are those of the Mackenzie River and farther west, who generally prefer rotten to fresh fish for eating raw. Meat is more often eaten 'high' here than farther west, but that seems a result of circumstance and is not a matter of preference. Caribou liver is, however, highly esteemed here, as everywhere to the west, after being allowed to ferment for some days under a hot sun inside a moss-filled caribou stomach. Seal oil fermented in an air-tight bag from spring till fall is by all Eskimo.... much preferred to the fresh."

2: Stefansson--61 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 252, 262

"The summer food being caribou and fish mainly, there is less cooking done in summer than in winter, though there is usually one cooked meal per day, the morning meal commonly. The last course here too is generally warm (never hot) blood soup, though I have seen caribou blood drunk unboiled. Birds and spermophiles are almost always cooked, and as above stated caribou heads always are. Marrow bones are cracked and the marrow eaten raw; caribou back fat is sometimes boiled and the intestinal and kidney fat usually is boiled. Eggs are always boiled if a fire is available."

2: Stefansson--233 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
262, 117

"Blubber Eating. The people here pare off the blubber from fresh seal meat too closely to suit me, or any of us. When I asked for parings (pared off after boiling) they were surprised. I have not seen them eat any blubber or oil, but they evidently expected me to prefer the raw. I have seen no 'sour' oil. All Eskimo I know (till these) set forward an oil pot, fresh, if there is no 'sour' at every meal."

2: Stefansson--245 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
262, 117

"Food. Seal heads are cooked and the meat eaten, but the bones only slightly broken to take out brain. Heads protected from dogs. At a deserted village I found a pile of some thirty heads that showed no dog gnawing though some meat on all, not clean picked, as bones seldom are here."

2: Stefansson--251 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
262, 177, 117

"Food. People here asked to taste the salt we put in soup, and after that firmly refused to taste any of our food, at previous places all have tasted the different sorts we have, pemmican, milk, and triscuit. Brought us seal meat after seeing us eat, evidently thinking we must be hard-pressed for food to eat such stuff. Say no deer around here usually. Have seal for food and fish from the lake inland."

2: Stefansson--255-256 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
262, 811, 117

"Typically an Eskimo is very diffident in advancing an opinion based on his own observation, but rock-firm in adherence [256] to views he gets from others 'for people would not keep saying it if it were not so.' The fact that many Eskimo here have names of white men (Nĕrk, several), etc., B. and T. refuse to regard as strange, as 'The people here, as we used to, no doubt have white men for turnnrat (familiar spirits) and name their children from them, as we used to.' When I pointed out that the name 'Nĕrk' is characteristically non-Eskimo, they said that was natural, as turnnrat who were white men naturally spoke like white men and had white men's names. I pointed out that Arrnatok had told us the Kablunak 'Nĕrk' had been averse to eating seal-oil; that too B. and T. said was natural, as many turnnrat have strong food-prejudices and B. personally knew of several turnnrat that would not eat seal oil; T. contributed that Alualuk's turnnrat would not eat seal-oil. B. added that being a white turnnrak, it would be especially natural he would not eat oil. The only thing that seems to them strange is the fact the 'Nĕrk' is said to have died. They do not know of turnnrat dying, but say that, come to think of it, it would be but natural they should die, though people naturally are not likely to become aware of this circumstance." (12)

"12. [Stefansson's comment, p. 453] The 'Nĕrk' or 'Neq' discussed here was afterwards clearly identified with Dr. Rae."

2: Stefansson--260 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
262, 117

"Have been trying to teach people to eat akpek. Most or all the men and children have tried and some like them. Most of the women refuse to taste them even, and those who taste do not like them. About the only berry they seem to eat is a small black one growing on a low shrub that resembles an evergreen, these berries none of us like, though I eat them when brought me as presents by the children. The name 'akpek' seems known to all and some, but not all know an 'akpek' by sight. The Akuliakattagmiut couple say they never saw an akpek before, but I think that is merely because they do not pay attention as the Akuliakattagmiut hunt close up to Tahierpik and the woods occasionally."

2: Stefansson--296 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
117, 262

"Food. Customs in general do not seem to differ from other people seen before. For first time saw deer droppings eaten. They had them in a bucket frozen and ate them as we do berries. Similarly when deer were killed at Kirkpûk's camp two days ago grubs were gathered in a small pail and passed around as a sort of dessert after the meal as we might nuts or fruit."

2: Stefansson--300-301 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
117, 262, 784

"May 12. Near Prince Albert Sound. Food Taboos. Hunting with Hupgok last summer was a young man (B. tells), Kamoarlok (Kogluktok) who forbade anybody to break for marrow bones of caribou he had killed. Both ends must be sawed off to get the marrow. This was because 'caribou might all leave the country, if the bones of any he had killed were broken for marrow.' This man would break in the ordinary way bones of caribou killed by anyone else. He was the only one last summer who, so far as any of us learned, put restrictions on manner of eating marrow. B. says in his place he heard of people who had similar restrictions as to breaking marrow [301] bones. When B. was young he had pain in his index finger. The doctor then told him that until he was a grown man he must not eat fish roe or he would quickly die. B. kept restriction some years but broke it before grown up. None of his people would eat ptarmigan heads with seal oil for fear of going blind."

11: Stefansson--265 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 262, 224

"To completely test the matter of whether there was a taboo or not, [JMR: a taboo against hunting caribou on ice] as well as to provide ourselves with fresh meat and our friends with a feast, Natkusiak and I intercepted one of the bands out of which he shot one and I shot three, two of three, by the way, being killed in one shot as the animals were running past at a distance of about three hundred yards. The Eskimo immediately went at the skinning energetically, and I photographed them while they were at it. The meat was then cut up and divided equitably among all the families and the cooking began at once."

Il: Stefansson--266 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 262, 784

"Here, however, everything was different. Not only did these seal hunters engage in the cutting up of the animals, but the meat was taken home and cooked in the same pots in which seal meat had been cooked and eaten; and not only the same day that seal meat had been eaten and the seals had been killed, but the seal meat and caribou meat were actually eaten at the same meal by the same individuals. One old man, however, said that he knew that it was not right to boil caribou meat in the same pot in which seal meat had been boiled unless you suspended the pot by a different string. His wife therefore took off the old greasy string which had served as a bale for the stone pot, braided a new sinew string, and swung the pot by that over the lamp. These Eskimo have various taboos relating to seal and to caribou, but none of those that I have seen in use or heard of, except in the case of this one incident of the string, had any tendency to keep the two apart."

11: Stefansson--294-295 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 262

"There are plenty of macu roots [polygonum biston-[295] tum] (1) on the Peninsula between the Sound and Minto [Inlet]--and elsewhere. People eat plenty of them. Many good fishing places here and there, but they do not live to nearly such an extent on fish as do the Ekalluktogmiut, who eat fish all winter, as well as seal."

"1. These roots form on the mainland the chief food of the marmot and the grizzly bear, both of which are absent from Victoria Island. All Eskimo known to me use this root as food—the Alaskans extensively, but the Victorians to a negligible extent only."

CHAPTER I

MATERIAL RESOURCES

Few people have been called upon to sustain life and perpetuate their race on such meagre resources as the Copper Eskimo. Even if they had been acquainted with agriculture the climate debarred it, just as it debarred the growth of trees except in two or three sheltered valleys along the southern fringe of their territory. It restricted not only the flora but the fauna, leaving the natives dependent for their food and for much of their equipment on one land animal, the seasonally migrating caribou, and two sea mammals, the foetid and the bearded seals, supplemented by such fish as they could capture in rivers, lakes, and bays. Ignorant of all metals except their native copper, which seemed to them only a malleable stone, and cut off from contact with any but neighbouring tribes, little or no more advanced than themselves, they had to build up their lives on the scanty resources provided by their own narrow environment, and rely on their own ingenuity to supply all their needs.

The resources provided by their environment fall naturally into four groups:

Wood
Stone (including native copper and other minerals)
Bone, antler, horn, ivory
Hides and sinew.

WOOD

The Copper Eskimo obtained their wood from two sources. First, there was the driftwood, mainly spruce and cottonwood, carried to the ocean by Mackenzie River far to the westward and borne by the winds and currents to Dolphin and Union Strait and western bays of Victoria Island. Then in the valleys of three rivers that flowed into Coronation Gulf, Coppermine, Napaktauktauk, and Tree, there stood scattered groves of spruce, small and stunted, a few miles from the coast, but larger as one proceeded south. Far to the southeast, too, near Thelon River, were other stands of spruce that the Eskimo from Bathurst Inlet and from the eastern shores of Victoria Island occasionally visited in their wanderings. Thus the Copper Eskimo had abundant wood to satisfy all their needs; but as driftwood was very scarce in many districts, and the standing timber on the southern fringe of their territory could be reached only after a long journey overland, which many natives were disinclined to make, manufactured objects of wood were among the commonest articles of trade and passed freely from one end of the territory to the other. Moreover, so crude were the Eskimo tools, and so great the labour of cutting down the trees and hewing the timber into shape, that any object of moderate size, such as a sled-runner, a table, or even a tent-pole, commanded a high price.[1]

The principal tools used in working wood were the adze and the whittling knife (*See* pp. 100 and 103). Bone or antler wedges, generally made for each occasion and immediately discarded, served to split small logs and planks; they were driven home with boulders. Lacking saws, the Eskimo shortened a plank in one or other of three ways: they hacked it with the adze; gouged it across with the grooving tool (*See* p. 100); or they drilled a line of holes across it with the bow drill.

[1] Cf. Stefansson, V.: The Stefansson-Anderson Arctic Expedition; Anth. Papers, Amer. Mus. of Nat. Hist., vol. XIV, pt. I, pp. 22, 62 F et al., New York, 1914.

a large hole where these protruded through and two small holes that marked the eye sockets. The ears he usually cut off at the roots, and pulled them out of the skin with his teeth at his leisure; but in certain circumstances, when it was forbidden to use a knife, he pulled free the outer integument on the spot.

In the late spring, when the caribou was putting on a new coat, the winter hair remained longest on the throat and belly. As this part was useless for clothing, the hair being prone to shed, the Eskimo frequently preserved only the part on which the new coat had already formed and threw the rest of the skin away. In such cases the preliminary incisions for removing the skin followed the outlines of the short hair. Often, however, the native anticipated the natural shedding of the winter hair by pulling it out with his thumb and fingers, leaving the new coat very short and spotted with white hairs, but in this condition highly prized. Later in the season, when the belly of the animal was covered with short white hair, invaluable for trimming, he made a cut along each flank and removed that part of the skin before detaching the remainder.

Blood stains were extracted by rubbing or stamping the skin in hard snow, which acted like damp blotting paper; or by steeping it in cold water and squeezing the hair. The Copper Eskimo woman was very careful not to allow a green skin to dry before scraping away with her curved knife the fat that still adhered to it; and as these scrapings were pure fat, she generally ate them at once, or put them aside for future consumption. Then she stretched the skin out to dry by pegging it to the ground with sticks or weighting down the edges with stones; the white belly skin and the large short-haired skins intended for bedding she always pegged down in order to stretch them as much as possible. When travelling across country day after day in the short Arctic summer, the skin was laid over the back of the pack or across a long pole; and at every halt it was stretched out afresh on the ground to hasten the drying, because a green skin weighed twice as much as a dry one. Once the skin was dry it could be laid aside and not touched again until needed. Then the owner sewed up the rents and scraped the whole underside with the copper- (now iron-) bladed scraper (*See* p. 84). The woman (or man, for the men often scraped skins while the women sewed them) sat back on the sleeping platform, or on the ground outside the tent, and stretched out the skin in front of her. Holding it tightly pinioned at the bottom between her crossed legs, she pulled it taut above the knee with her left hand and scraped rapidly downwards away from her with the right. A sudden relaxation of the leg, and a quick jerk, found her scraping in a new place. To the onlooker her body seemed strained and her attitude very uncomfortable, but long practice greatly reduced the fatigue, though the labour really was hard. Indeed I have seen the perspiration rolling down a woman's face as she scraped a skin outdoors when the temperature was below zero Fahrenheit.

The Copper Eskimo woman often ate the scrapings that came away during this operation, although they contained very little fat. To soften the skin still further she rubbed tepid water over its under surface, folded it up, and laid it on one side for a few hours. Then she scraped it again, this time with an instrument made from the shoulder blade of a musk-ox, which merely stretched and softened the skin without removing anything from its surface (*See* p. 83).

The stretching and softening of the skin was usually the last process it underwent before it was made up into clothing. If, however, the woman desired the skin without fur, as for making the upper legs of her long boots, she scraped the hair from the dry skin with her curved knife. Copper Eskimo clothing was often decorated with red, black, or white bands; the white was the natural colour of the skin; the red was produced by rubbing with litharge; and the black parts were either untanned sealskin, or else seal or caribou skin stained with galena. Ordinary dirt stains on white deerskin could be removed with dry snow.

223 They skinned birds in exactly the same way as small animals, except that
237 they tore the skin of a small bird down the legs without cutting it, and, when
825 drawing the skin over the head, held the feet in the teeth instead of tying them
136 to a tent-pole or other convenient object. Loon skins made excellent whisks for beating off the mosquitoes. The bill of the largest species of loon, *Gavia stellata*, was frequently sewn to the top of the dancing cap; and the feet skins of swans, geese, and ducks converted into tinder bags. Every household had its stock of ptarmigan skins for use as dusters, and to wipe the hands and face after eating or handling blubber; one skin served the whole family and all its visitors until every feather was worn out. The Eskimo used other bird skins for the same purpose, especially sea-gull skins, the oily feathers being naturally more suitable for towels than ptarmigan feathers. The skins of fish were usually eaten. The Copper Eskimo, unlike others of their race, never made any real clothing from fish or bird skins, although sometimes they stuffed a few feathers or the skin of a loon inside their sealskin shoes.

[301] [415] [515] [762] [294]

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with their own country, which contained enough seals and caribou to satisfy all their needs.

I intended to revisit the settlement on Victoria Island at the earliest opportunity, but preferred to choose my own travelling companions. Our guests therefore returned alone, while I arranged to spend a few days in the hut of the leader of our local tribe. My host, the hero of the skirmish with the grizzly, had now recovered the use of his right hand, and was preparing to cross to the Liston and Sutton Islands for the seal-hunt, since it was still too early in the winter to build a hut on the sea-ice far away from land. He suggested that I should join his train to the islands and push on later to Victoria Island, which was but thirty-five miles beyond; and as the invitation accorded well with my plans I accepted gladly.

The wife of my host was Light, the lady who had filched the pot and the frying-pan from our station. It has not been my habit to lodge among thieves, but my experience on this occasion was most encouraging. Light was charming as a hostess. She licked my plate before each meal that I might eat from a clean dish, and when handing me boiled seal meat from her steaming pot she squeezed it tenderly between thumb and forefinger that no surplus juice might drip on my clothing. Lacking candy, she showered on me the national substitute, delicate cubes of oily seal-blubber;

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123
[262] but, lacking the national taste, I slipped most of them surreptitiously to the dogs.

114
[123] Two of the five families in this tribe crossed to the islands a day earlier than the others. I accompanied the second party, which started out in the darkness of the morning. After traversing the first nine miles without difficulty we came upon rough ice that had been piled into jagged hummocks by the autumn gales, and my light sled, modelled after a European
114
493 pattern, upset three times before we passed through. The Eskimo sleds were more stable, for their crossbars rested directly on the stout runners, and with the heavier articles, such as stone lamps and bales of meat and blubber, lying at the bottom, the centre of gravity was close to the ground. None of them overbalanced, although they were piled six feet high with the household possessions.

114
823 The nearest of the islands was Putulik, "the island pierced with a hole"; for legend stated that a large cave extended under the water from one side to the
114
342 other. We approached it shortly before dark, and my host sent forward his twelve-year-old son to pick out a house-site. The inexperienced lad chose a spot where the snow was too shallow, but his father, sounding the depth all around with a long stick of antler, quickly found a more suitable location. While the men erected their huts, the women built low ramparts around the outer walls to increase the warmth inside

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and to serve as storage-places for the bales of clothing. In little more than an hour the lamps burned brightly again in every home and we were dining sumptuously on dried trout and frozen salmon.

The snow-hut of the Eskimo is too well known to require a detailed description. It resembles the upper half of a sphere, slightly flattened at the top, with a diameter at the floor level of about nine feet and a maximum height slightly below six. A low platform covered with musk-ox and caribou robes takes up more than half the floor space; it serves as a bed by night and a place for sitting and working during the day. The entrance, which faces the middle of the platform, is simply a hole at the bottom of the wall large enough for a person to crawl through on hands and knees; a single snow-block at night makes a satisfactory door. To the right (or left) of the entrance is the saucer-shaped lamp for burning seal-blubber; the stone cooking-pot hangs over it, and over the pot is a large tray or rack where boots and mittens are spread out to dry. A table between the lamp and the sleeping-platform completes the furniture, but bags containing meat and blubber, and dishes of various kinds, litter the floor on both sides of the entrance. Finally, a low-roofed passage extending outward from the doorway ten to thirty feet leads into the open air.

The adjoining plan of a two-roomed hut, and the photographs scattered throughout the book, will give

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as a notable landmark in the otherwise featureless shore-line. Farther east was a low stone monument set up by Sir John Richardson's party nearly seventy years before, although from its appearance it might have been standing but a few months. Time's ravages work slowly in the Arctic; M'Clintock's expedition to Melville Island in 1853 discovered hardly a trace of moss on the tracks of Sir Edward Parry's carts that had passed over the tundra in 1820.

We encountered our first caribou in Richardson Bay, near the mouth of the Coppermine River, where a herd of about a hundred were grazing on a ridge overlooking the frozen sea. Anderson and Palaiyak pursued them and shot three. We cached part of the meat under the largest boulders we could find; but since the wolverines would dislodge a stone that two of us could hardly lift, we covered the boulders with snow, and converted the snow into ice by pouring water over it. We hoped by this means to outwit the crafty animals and preserve a small stock of meat for Anderson's return journey. But they proved too much for us; they tunnelled under the surrounding snow and entered the cache from below, as we discovered a fortnight later.

Every hunter in the North develops a taste for the marrow in the leg-bones of the caribou; so it was not surprising that Anderson, Johansen, and myself, sitting round the camp-stove that night, should pile two dozen bones in our midst, and proceed to crack them on stone

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earlier, but the dogs were troublesome and the load heavier than I anticipated." 123 484

I questioned him about his route, for the two maps on which I relied, that of Rae, the Arctic explorer, and the chart of the British Admiralty, disagreed concerning this part of the coast. The chart had a deep inlet behind Cape Kendall which did not appear on Rae's map, while Rae (who named the cape Point Pullen) showed an island to the westward that was missing on the chart. Ikpuck's explanation, and my own observations later in the summer, revealed a land-locked bay that nearly severed Cape Kendall from the mainland; in portaging across the isthmus instead of following the coast, Ikpuck had shortened his journey by several miles. West of the point a long sandbar stretched out toward a high, rocky islet that harboured the remains of an ancient settlement. Both maps, then, were right; the full truth lay in combining them.

Our load of caribou fat was indeed heavy, for it had been lying in a cache eight months. It weighted not only the sled, but the surrounding atmosphere. I kept to windward of it, or well in front of the dogs, but distance seemed to make no appreciable difference. Ikpuck, on the contrary, sniffed the air with satisfaction, and nibbled small pieces of the fat as we marched along. When the provisions we had brought gave out that evening it furnished him both breakfast and supper. [251] [262]

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supper. Only thirst distressed him, for we had exhausted the oil in our primus lamp and had no means of melting ice or snow. Fortunately, thirty-six hours later, we came upon a settlement of four snow-huts occupied by some Eskimos who were migrating to the mainland, and were able to slake our thirst from their cooking-pots. These natives, too, seemed to regard our caribou fat as an unusual luxury; but I myself derived more enjoyment from the juicy meat of a freshly killed seal.

The distance from this settlement to our own was only about fifteen miles, which we expected to cover easily in one day; but a heavy fall of snow at night obliterated all the trails, and the dense fog that succeeded hid from view everything beyond the leading dog. We wandered from early morning until late in the evening vainly searching for the tents, and at last, giving up all hope, built a small snow-hut and turned into our sleeping-bags. I filled a cup with snow to thaw out against my body, and realized, as never before, how much heat is required to melt a little snow, and how much snow to yield one teaspoonful of water.

The fog dispersed before morning, and we discovered the settlement a mile and a half to our left. An hour later Icehouse was distributing the caribou fat among the enthusiastic villagers, while Ikpuck and I, resting on the sleeping-platform, regaled ourselves

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LENGTHENING DAYS

The Eskimos, who were greatly amused at my ignorance of everything pertaining to sealing, now scored another laugh at my expense. As we gazed down into the seal-hole one of them asked me whether I intended to drink from it. The joke seemed so obvious that I answered rather casually, "No. I do not care to drink salt sea-water." But the men around me smiled, and my questioner, kneeling down, scooped up a handful of slush ice that was floating on the surface, let it drain through his fingers for a moment, and swallowed it with gusto. Still doubting, I tested the ice myself; it was perfectly fresh, being simply the pure snow above converted into slush when it fell into the water.

The only hardship we suffered on these journeys was thirst, caused by the want of liquids in our diet. We breakfasted on cold boiled seal meat left over from our supper, dragged the heavy sleds from ten to fifteen miles, and re-erected the cumbersome tents at the conclusion of the march; then, when the day's work was ended, we sat down to our second meal, and received from the cooking-pot another ration of seal meat. No fruit, no vegetables; morning and night nothing but seal meat washed down with ice-cold water or hot broth. The pot of tea I made as soon as the tents were erected gave little relief to so many parched throats. One man drank two large cups of soup, two of tea, and nine of ice-cold water, all within the space

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Our party split up each morning and drifted in different directions, each person carrying a fishing outfit, and the men their hunting weapons. Nine or ten hours later the women straggled back with their fish, bearing also, in fine weather, loads of dryads to cook the evening meal. They cut off the heads of the fish for the cooking-pots, threw the backbones and fins to the dogs, and spread the bodies on boulders, or across horizontal poles to dry in the sun. The whole party then reassembled an hour or two before midnight, and, squatting outside the tents, gnawed the fish-heads, bone by bone, and discussed the day's adventures. The hungry dogs looked on with mournful eyes; tied to stones, they dined miserably on bones and broth.

I hunted, most of this period, to obtain caribou meat for my starving dog-team, but during a fortnight's steady tramping saw but two young bulls, which we consumed entirely in three days. The stony ridges cut to pieces my light sealskin boots, intended only for soft snow, and Icehouse, who had tried to patch them each evening, finally rebelled. "Stop hunting for a time," she said. "Your boots are wrecked beyond repair, and caribou will be scarce until the warmer weather comes and the mosquitoes drive them near our camps. Stop hunting, and I will make you new boots with stouter soles for the summer months."

It was not only my boots that troubled her. She believed that an evil demon, haunting the hills to the

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shades of white men; I named them for her, Jack, Bob, Mary, Jane, and soothed them with fair words until they departed. Others, that were the shades of Eskimos, she herself propitiated in like manner, and banished with her knife a few that seemed loth to depart. At last her efforts succeeded; the jacket told her that the atmosphere would clear on the morrow, and, greatly relieved, she retired to her sleeping-bag to await the result.

An east wind sprang up in the morning and the fog lifted. "Look," she cried, issuing from the tent. "Yesterday we assailed the fog and it has vanished." Ikpuck and his party appeared about noon, weary, but otherwise none the worse for their experience. Thinking it useless to search for the camp until the weather cleared they had wandered about, fishing in different lakes, and huddling together at night on patches of bare ground. Ikpuck had shot a bull caribou that strayed near them, and they had satisfied their hunger with the marrow and back fat, seasoning them with raw fish.

The Runner now decided to move to a lake farther north where they had caught many fish during their late excursion; but Ikpuck wanted to continue eastward in search of more caribou. The former departed first. We watched his family disappear over the ridge, then packed up our own equipment and marched away. So our last link with the tribe was severed, and the dispersal of the band complete.

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226 ward from the hole, slowing down to a walk as the end of the line approached the under surface of the ice. The fish, half drowned by its rapid ascent, had then no time to jerk itself free of the hook, although it might easily tear loose if it struck the edge of the fishing-hole. By slowing down to a walk, Ikpuck could govern its passage through the ice with more caution.

For the guidance of the uninitiated angler I should add two rules that the Eskimos have tested and found useful. Respect the craving of trout and salmon for water by turning the heads of your catch toward the pool; then others will surely gather to your hook and seek to join their brethren on the ice. Secondly, when you lower your line into the water again, do not forget to say, "Encore, encore, give me another."

• 262 The rules concerning diet I cannot recommend with 252 the same confidence. The Eskimos, who knew no vegetables save the semi-digested moss in the stomachs of the caribou, ate only meat and fish, preferably boiled, for second choice dried or frozen, and raw when necessary. Here in the Colville Hills scarcity of fuel made boiled fish a luxury that we could enjoy 262 only two or three times a week. Breakfast consisted 264 always of a half-raw fish taken from a drying-pole and consumed usually in one's sleeping-bag; dinner did not exist, and supper was boiled fish on lucky days 262 and the same as breakfast on unlucky. The digestions 114

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of my companions seemed proof against every outrage, but my own rebelled. An insidious dysentery attacked me, making me at last so weak that I could hardly drag myself to the fishing-ground. My throat became dry like parchment, and drinking the clear water in the fishing-holes merely aggravated the dysentery without relieving the thirst. Altogether my predicament was rather alarming.

No parents could have been kinder to me at this time than were Ikpuck and Icehouse. Believing that all disease had a supernatural origin, Icehouse tried to exorcise the agencies responsible for my ill-health. That she failed to cure me distressed but did not surprise her, for, as she herself remarked, Eskimo remedies had no efficacy with white men. She showed her sympathy in a more practical manner by giving me the choicest morsels of fish, and by foraging far and wide for dryads in order to cook more frequently. Yet in spite of all her efforts my health failed to improve, and at last I sent The Runner to the Lake of Dancing to bring me a few ounces of malted milk and three pounds of dog-pemmican that I had stored there in a cache. The malted milk lasted me two days, after which I began on the pemmican, prepared forty years earlier for the fur posts of the Hudson's Bay Trading Company. It was brown with antiquity, and consisted merely of dried beef crushed to powder, with here and there fragments of bones; but mixed

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EPILOGUE

Within ten years of our departure from Bernard Harbour one third of them had been swept away by influenza, and of the hundred Eskimos gathered around the radio station at Coppermine no fewer than twenty-six suffered from advanced tuberculosis.

Was this inevitable? Had we been more conscious of our responsibilities could we have spared them so rude an awakening, so painful an entry into what we call a civilized world? Or does fate spin her web remorselessly, blind to human hopes and weaknesses, indifferent to human suffering?

The children of Jennie's generation who escaped the new diseases underwent a social and economic revolution. Even as we sailed away traders entered their country seeking fox-furs, always fox-furs; and for those pelts so useless for real clothing they offered rifles, shot-guns, steel tools and other goods that promised to make life much easier. So the Eskimos abandoned their communal seal hunts and scattered in isolated families along the coasts in order to trap white foxes during the winter months when the fur of that animal reaches its prime. Their dispersal loosened the old communal ties that had held the families together. The men no longer labored for the entire group, but hunted and trapped each one for his family alone. Their diet and costume changed: more and more it became the diet and costume of the white man. For they had to purchase their winter's supply of food from the trading stores, since trapping

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263 CONDIMENTS--kinds of condiments used in the preparation and consumption of food (e.g., salt, sugar, honey, spices); processing of savory herbs and spices; uses of condiments; etc. See also:

Use of seasoning in cooking 382
Salt manufacture 388
Manufacture of sugar and sweet confections . . 287

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shades of white men; I named them for her, Jack, Bob, Mary, Jane, and soothed them with fair words until they departed. Others, that were the shades of Eskimos, she herself propitiated in like manner, and banished with her knife a few that seemed loth to depart. At last her efforts succeeded; the jacket told her that the atmosphere would clear on the morrow, and, greatly relieved, she retired to her sleeping-bag to await the result.

An east wind sprang up in the morning and the fog lifted. "Look," she cried, issuing from the tent. "Yesterday we assailed the fog and it has vanished." Ikpuck and his party appeared about noon, weary, but otherwise none the worse for their experience. Thinking it useless to search for the camp until the weather cleared they had wandered about, fishing in different lakes, and huddling together at night on patches of bare ground. Ikpuck had shot a bull caribou that strayed near them, and they had satisfied their hunger with the marrow and back fat, seasoning them with raw fish.

The Runner now decided to move to a lake farther north where they had caught many fish during their late excursion; but Ikpuck wanted to continue eastward in search of more caribou. The former departed first. We watched his family disappear over the ridge, then packed up our own equipment and marched away. So our last link with the tribe was severed, and the dispersal of the band complete.